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METHODIST

Peace Courier

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A CROSSROADS IN FOREIGN POLICY

In view of widespread demands for a sharp cut in the proposed budget for 1958, Congress faces some major decisions in regard to the foreign aid program. Special studies of this program have been made by several governmental and private agencies.

The decisions that Congress makes will have a far-reaching effect not only on American policy and influence abroad but also on the welfare and economic development of hundreds of millions of people in scores of countries.

In 1956, foreign aid received 2.7 billion dollars; in 1957, 3.77 billion; for 1958, 4.4 billion is being asked. But look carefully at the breakdown of these figures. Military Assistance has increased from 1 billion dollars in 1956, to 2 billion in 1957, to 2.45 billion in 1958. Defense Support (which has some economic values) has risen from 1 billion dollars in 1956, to 1.16 billion in 1957, to an estimated 1.6 billion in 1958.

At the same time Economic Aid (which includes funds for Development Assistance, U.S. Technical Cooperation, UN Technical Assistance, and other multilateral programs) fell from 0.68 billion in 1956 to 0.59 billion in 1957 and probably will not be over 0.65 billion in 1958. It is clear that increased spending has come in the category of military rather than economic aid, and when we consider that economists estimate that the underdeveloped areas of the world annually lack 10 billion dollars for capital development, we can see that our American contribution will meet only a fraction of the need.

Testifying before the Senate special committee to study the foreign-aid program on April 8, Secretary of State Dulles recommended (1) that all foreign military assistance and defense support be included with the Defense Department's budget in the future, (2) that economic aid be considered separately with a new emphasis on loans (with some grants) for economic development, and (3) that the economic aid program be put on a long-term rather than an annual basis, with advance allocations for individual countries eliminated, thus providing greater flexibility. These proposals represent an important step in putting our aid program on a sound basis with assured continuity.

Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, president of the National Council of Churches, testified for the Council before the Senate special committee for a strong foreign aid program to meet human need. After citing some practical arguments, Dr. Blake emphasized that the moral grounds included our involvement in the destiny of men everywhere, our stewardship as a wealthy nation in a world of poverty, our concern for the sacredness of life and the needs of men, and our recognition of the moral and spiritual values in economic and technical cooperation. In conclusion, Dr. Blake pointed out that in foreign aid questions, we are dealing ultimately with questions of life and death, of the nature of man and his destiny, moral questions which rest on theology and religious faith.

ACTION NEEDED NOW!

If Christian opinion on this issue is to be effective, it must be mobilized and expressed promptly. The President's special message on foreign aid will come early in May. Congressional opinions will be formed rather definitely during May and June. Here are our action suggestions.

1. Write, wire, or visit your senators and representatives. In addition to stating your convictions, ask one or more specific questions and request copies of the government studies being made of foreign aid. If possible, send copies of your letters to the President and the Secretary of State.

2. Organize group study and individual and group action in both church and community on the question of economic aid and technical assistance. For resource materials and copies of the congressional directory, REGISTER CHRISTIAN OPINION (10¢ each, 15 for $1.00), write to the Board of World Peace.

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The following items should be ordered from the Board of World Peace, 740 Rush Street, Chicago 11, Illinois:

Blueprint for Foreign Aid by Paul G. Hoffman, a Church Peace Union reprint from The New York Times magazine. Single copy, 5¢ handling charge; 25¢ per 12.

Technical Assistance in Brief, the UN program. 5¢ each.

Seeds of Progress, eight stories of UN Technical Assistance, 30¢ each.

Let's Join the Human Race by Stringfellow Barr, still a classic statement of the need for an adequate aid program. 25¢ each.

Review of the Eleventh UN General Assembly, an excellent summary reprinted from the New York Times by the American Association for the United Nations. 5¢ handling charge; 25¢ per 12.

STUDIES OF FOREIGN AID

A New Emphasis on Economic Development Abroad, a Report to the President on Ways, Means, and Reasons for U.S. Assistance to International Economic Development. Available free from the International Development Advisory Board, Washington 25, D.C.

Report to the President by the President's Citizen Advisers on the Mutual Security Program Available free from the International Cooperation Administration, Washington 25, D.C.

Report No. 2 on "Objectives of U.S. Economic Assistance Programs" and Report No. 6 on the "Role of Foreign Aid in the Development of Other Countries" of the Special Senate Committee to Study the Foreign Aid Program. Available free from your senator, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C.

UNUSED RESOURCE PERSONS

We continually search for new and interesting programs; perhaps we ought to hunt more often for new and informed persons. One major untapped resource in local leadership is the unused resource persons found in every parish and community. Frequently we overlook them as we continue to pile responsibility on the stalwart regulars in our midst. We miss both new life and new viewpoints this way. Furthermore, we blunt a real outreach opportunity in the process.

Momentarily, we may doubt that there are such unused persons in our neighborhood but a bit of careful reflection may dispel our doubts.

There are informed people. In farm communities it may be the county agent, the Grange officer, the school superintendent, a staff member of the agricultural experiment station. In the public schools there may be a local teacher returned from a teaching assignment abroad or even an exchange teacher from another land. The high school may be utilizing the international student exchange. At the nearby college there are foreign students, Wesley Foundation students and staff members, as well as faculty who afford invaluable aid. Former work-campers and caravaners may be in your own MYF. Other students may have participated in UN or Washington seminars. In matters of books and publications do not overlook the town librarian, or children's librarians, who are surprisingly alert to reading for children on lands and peoples afar. In larger cities and especially seaport towns, consuls of foreign nations are very responsive on issues or situations involving their home countries.

There are traveled people. Military personnel -- often young married couples -- come home from every segment of the globe. More and more people vacation abroad; great corporations shift their workmen from region to region; service clubs, civic agencies, labor unions and fraternal orders send representatives to all sorts of international conventions and assemblies. It is almost a duty to save them from merely showing their pictures to house parties on their return.

The hopeful part of it is many of these are concerned people. It may be some hungry children, or victims of disease and plague, or wandering refugees, or bomb rubble, or just a sense of the breadth and variety of the human family, but some return as very concerned people -- a concern that needs channeling.

Too often we are held back from using "outsiders" by certain unconscious prejudices. One is to think of leaders as "platform people" demanding very special qualities, thus overlooking the increasing use of group enterprises in church study and action. Another is to fear their possible partisan viewpoint, forgetting that every significant position is one of conviction and the consul loyally defending his country before a group

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ECONOMIC AID

After World War II the two-thirds-of-the-orld-that-goes-to-bed-hungry-every-night ooked with amazement upon the money given o Europe through the Marshall Plan. They aid, "Our standard of living has never been s high as the lowest level in Europe."

This point of view disturbed the American onscience and in 1948 was answered by Presi-nt Truman's Point IV proposal for a techni-l assistance program. Legislation for tech-ical assistance, however, would have failed the Senate in 1950, had it not been for rong church support. The churches have al-ys supported technical assistance!

The program has made a good name for it-lf. Millions have been helped in Asia, rica, and South America: food supplies ve increased, malaria has decreased, land s been conserved, forests have developed, indness has been curbed, and pure water de available.

In the March 1957 issue of the United ations Review there are thirteen pages de-oted to how technical assistance has changed lives. A man from Belgium helped farmers in aiti grow good potatoes. A woman from Eng-and taught the blind in Egypt how to read raille. A doctor from the United States gave ripples in Indonesia the ability to walk. n engineer from the United States taught urmese business men how to expand their acilities.

During the last several years our govern-nt has invested about $15,000,000 in the tech-ical assistance program operated by the United tions (multilateral) and about $135,000,000 the technical assistance program operated by self (bilateral).

We believe that this program ought to ontinue for many years to come. Our own high vel of farm production rests upon many years technical assistance from government agen-es, and we have drawn upon types of seed and rains of cattle from many other countries. e world will need technical assistance at ast for another 25 years.

We also believe that this assistance ould be given more and more through the ited Nations. The underdeveloped nations efer this channel. It is an efficient channel. is a channel which operates entirely on the sis of need and is not related to political nsiderations. It is a channel which gives nor and luster to the good name of the UN. rthermore, some countries feel that because of domestic political situations or geographical location, they cannot accept aid directly from the U.S.A.

CAPITAL ASSISTANCE

However, underdeveloped countries need more than technical counsel. Frequently they need the money or goods by which to implement the advice given. A delegate from South America once remarked in the United Nations: "Our archives are full of blueprints. They are good. But we must have money to build the schools, hospitals, and factories which are so desirable."

Should they not get such money by taxes? Yes, some of it can be obtained in this way, but the average annual income per person may be only $50. Can they not borrow the money from the World Bank? Yes, they can obtain some money there, but only for industrial projects such as hydroelectric installations and steel mills which are "good risks" and produce revenue.

For seven years the underdeveloped nations in the United Nations have been talking about a special United Nations Fund for Economic Development (SUNFED). This fund, starting modestly with 250 million dollars, would be used freely for capital needs around the world. Rates of interest on loans would vary.

But SUNFED has never come to life! Most of the members want it, but some of the larger nations, especially the United States have opposed its establishment. Our spokesmen have said that it must await money saved from disarmament, that the program is too weak in conception, and that public opinion will not support it. Probably the last consideration is the main one, for surely our share of $100,000,000 could easily be found, if we wanted to find it!

CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES

In the whole question of foreign aid, we should keep in mind basic Christian principles: Our great wealth is from God and should be used for the advancement of His Kingdom all over the world. "If someone who is rich sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how can he have any love for God in his heart?" (I John 3:17)

How much should we give? In accordance with our ability and the need! Experts from the UN have calculated that the underdeveloped nations need about ten billion dollars of foreign capital annually. Gaitskell of Britain suggested that each nation contribute 1% of its national income to a common international fund. That would amount to about four billion dollars for the United States.

Our motive for economic aid should be love. We should help those in need and expect no favors or votes in return. Receiving nations should deserve aid and use it wisely. For these reasons the bulk of our aid should be channeled through the United Nations. In this way we express our love most purely!

We should rejoice that Christian love is

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no more partisan than the churchman exhort-g for his faith. Most of all, we must over-me the fatal prejudice that secular and blic knowledge is somehow inferior in aiding form Christian understanding and insight into e major problems of the modern world. To be-n using the unused might even disarm some of r false fears.

now being expressed through our tax dollars. Even as the educational needs of this nation cannot be met solely by church colleges but must be helped by state universities, so missionary programs can never fill the great economic needs of the world. Christians believe as much in a consecrated federal tax dollar as they do in a world service dollar!

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN YOUTH EXCHANGE

Methodists are participating with three other denominations in a Christian youth exchange program involving high school young people of the U.S. and nine European countries. It is hoped that the program will grow to include cooperation with Christian groups in other countries as well.

Under this program high school young people 16 to 18 years of age, usually seniors, will come to the U.S. to attend school and live as part of an American family for a year. Sponsors will include churches, youth groups, schools and similar agencies.

In turn, qualified high school students from the U.S. will go to spend a year abroad, probably while juniors. They will live in the home of a European family and attend school. Support for this part of the project will be worked out jointly between the family of the young person and the sponsoring committee with help from churches and other community agencies. Wherever possible a two-way exchange between European and American homes or communities will be worked out. Further information on the project can be obtained from Rev. Joseph Bell, Youth Department, Box 871, Nashville 2, Tennessee.

NEWS BRIEFS

Spend or return seized property? Several bills are now before Congress on either spending or returning property worth one-half billion dollars seized from German and Japanese aliens in this country at the beginning of World War II. Property of Italians and other aliens of belligerent countries was quickly returned after the war.

Report from Ecuador: Heifer Project News reports that great crowds met the planes bringing 125 goats to that country. Mr. Boothby, FAO sheep specialist, reports that Heifer Project sheep wool from earlier imported animals is already four times more valuable than native wool.

President Eisenhower told a press conference recently that so-called foreign aid should be referred to as mutual aid, "because it is not only the welfare of somebody else we are seeking; we are seeking our own future markets, prosperity, and peace; and so, as we work with these countries, we are working also for ourselves."

NEEDED: OTC TO HELP GATT

For several years reductions in tariffs have been negotiated multilaterally in what is known as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). This cooperation has resulted in a reduction of trade barriers and a steady increase in the international exchange of goods to the benefit of all participating countries.

In order to further implement GATT, an agreement was negotiated to establish the Organization for Trade Cooperation (OTC). The U.S. signed the agreement March 21, 1955 subject to Congressional approval of U.S. participation. The function of OTC will be to administer GATT, in which approximately 35 countries participate, which involves tariff concessions on thousands of articles, and which guards against restrictive devices which would nullify these concessions. International administrative supervision is necessary if GATT is to work effectively and achieve maximum benefits for all.

The agreement for OTC will come into effect when accepted by governments accounting for 85% of the foreign trade conducted by the nations participating in GATT. Thus the approval of the U.S. is essential since our country accounts for over 20% of the trade involved.

Legislation providing for the participation of the U.S. in OTC was introduced in Congress in 1956 but was not acted upon. It has been reintroduced at the request of President Eisenhower and is one of the important issues before the present session of Congress. Persons interested in strengthening the economic foundations of peace will want to communicate their support of U.S. participation in the OTC through letters to their senators and representatives.

In an editorial the New York Times commented: "The overwhelming part of our present aid to foreign countries is for essentially military purposes--quite likely a disproportionate part. When the American people understand how relatively little we have been spending on economic assistance, a more sympathetic atmosphere may be created for necessary expansion of this kind of help to those parts of the world that either are free or are seeking freedom from the domination of Communist, imperialist Russia."

FREE FREE

Christian Faith and the World Crisis, a study on the East-West conflict by the Boston University School of Theology faculty, 1952, 32pp. Send 3¢ postage for single copies. Quantities will be sent on request express collect. Recommended to conference boards for distribution at annual conference.